

Killian Morris
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Dear Killian

Planning Application for the redevelopment of Leegate

Thank you for taking time to speak to me at the exhibition of St Modwen's most recent proposals for the redevelopment of Leegate. It was a good turnout and I am pleased that local people had another chance to talk to you and your colleagues about St Modwen's ideas for the site.

As you know, I have long held an interest in Leegate. As someone who has lived in Lee Green for the last 12 years, I am very keen to see the centre redeveloped. The centre is a blight on our area and I am keen that a high quality development comes forward, providing a mix of retail, commercial and residential space.

I know St Modwen worked hard in recent years to improve upon the initial idea of a part-redevelopment, part-refurbishment of the site and existing buildings. I believe the current proposals to be a marked improvement on those proposals but I am yet to be convinced that your plans have reached the stage where they should be submitted as a planning application. I am therefore writing to you to ask you to delay a planning application and to continue to work with both the local community and Lewisham planners to finesse a scheme which commands local support.

I am personally still concerned about the additional traffic which this redevelopment will create. Whilst I have always maintained that ideally the redevelopment of this site would not include another major supermarket, I appreciate that in order to make a development commercially viable, sometimes difficult decisions have to be taken. However, local people need to be reassured that this scheme and the associated deliveries and customer traffic will not result in even more gridlock on our roads. I have yet to see any detailed assessment of the traffic impacts and I would like to know when this will be available.

As I said to you at your exhibition in June of this year, I am also concerned about the covered walk way which will provide a route through the scheme from Burnt Ash Road to Leyland Road. On the drawings I have seen, I think this element of the scheme looks unattractive and I am not sure it adequately addresses local demand for a well-designed, high quality pedestrian route.

I am also aware that many local people have concerns about the amount and nature of public space that is included in your latest plans. Personally, I find the idea of a wide linear public space on Burnt Ash Road quite appealing but I am not convinced that the overall quantum of public space is sufficient. It would be helpful if you could provide a detailed breakdown of the amount of public space (excluding pavement space) on both the existing site and in your plans.

I hope you will consider my request to continue to work with local people and planners to address these issues. You will know that I have also written to you about how residents who live in the flats above Leegate may be supported and I hope solutions can be found to address their concerns too.

You should be aware that I have sent a copy of this letter to the local press and I will also share it with residents who contact me about this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Heidi Alexander MP
Member of Parliament for Lewisham East